

The Daily Charge

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Telling the MND-Baghdad Story

Friday, June 1, 2007



(Photo by by Spc. Alexis Harrison, 2-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

Eyes on Iraq

Salt Lake City native Staff Sgt. Zachary Tooman, a section leader with Troop C, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, scans the horizon while his fellow troops check out a warehouse in Baghdad's Karkh District during a patrol May 23. The troops from Fort Lewis, Wash., moved to the area and began setting up a combat outpost and conducting patrols after stints in Abu Discher and Diwaniyah.

Troops Tackle New Hurdle: Stand Combat Outpost

By Spc. Alexis Harrison
2-1 Cav. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - The troops from Task Force 1-14 Cavalry, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, operating in the Iraqi capital as part of the 2nd

Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, have had to go through many changes.

First, they moved from Forward Operating Base Falcon to FOB Union III after the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division showed

up a few months ago.

Then, the squadron of cavalrymen who ride on their fleet-footed Strykers received the mission to go down south of the capital about 80 miles to Diwaniyah, to help take back a community on the brink of

peril.

Finally, the boys from Fort Lewis, Wash., got to come back and begin their newest mission: stand up a combat outpost and

National Policemen Give Gifts to Al Furat Children

By Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons
4-1 Inf. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - Iraqi Security Forces and Multinational Division-Baghdad troops made children's lives a little better in the Al Furat region of Baghdad by dropping of humanitarian supplies May 19.

Policemen of the 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade (Mechanized) of the Iraqi National Police and the "Black Lions" of 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., dropped off soccer balls, clothing and food to children in front of the council members' office and in a nearby

gated community.

"It's nice to be able to provide an opportunity for Coalition Forces, Iraqi National Police and the citizens of Al Furat to have a friendly gathering and bring smiles to the faces of so many impressionable Iraqi children," said Maj. E. E. Smith, 1-1st National Police Transition Team.

The mission is part of the multi-faceted Baghdad security plan and highlights the cooperation between the Iraqis and their Coalition partners.

"I was honored to help Iraq's future leaders," said Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Whitworth, a police transition team member.



(U.S. Army photo)

An policeman with 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade (Mechanized) of the Iraqi National Police, gives a soccer ball to a child in the Al Furat May 19.

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Soldiers Jump into Community, Take it Back

Standing

From Page 1

patrol the volatile streets of Karkh and Haifa Street, near the city's center.

According to one platoon leader, 1st Lt. Courtney Dean, even though the weather is scalding hot and they've been all over Iraq, things are improving and they hope to make the same improvements in Karkh as they did in Diwaniyah and Abu Discher.

Dean and the rest of his 3rd Platoon, Troop C, was out on mission just like any other day. The temperature peaked at 110 degrees. Sweat poured off the troops during their reconnaissance of a rail yard and warehouse compound on the north side of Karkh near the Baghdad train station.

"You get used to the heat," said Staff Sgt. Zachary Tooman from Salt Lake City. "There's not much you can do other than drink lots of water."

Dean said that since they're new to the area, they want to get to know what's happening in and around places that could be places to store weapons or hideouts for anti-Iraq forces.

About a dozen huge warehouses sit near the rail yard. Dean said that the yard used to be one of the main railroad hubs in

Iraq. Its size still shows of the commerce that once traveled into and out of the capital, but the dust and debris covering the area tells a tale of inactivity.

Inside the warehouses, guards stand at their posts keeping a watchful eye over stockpiles of items like rice, oil or sugar. As the troops approached the first building, the air drastically changed from the usual smells of the city to a fragrant, flowery smell. The warehouse was filled with laundry detergent.

Before the Soldiers made their way to the warehouses, they had to make a vital stop at their new combat outpost along the river. They delivered supplies like insect repellent, mosquito netting and ice to their comrades already manning the post.

Tooman said that everyone will have a turn manning the post, and it's best to get it equipped with everything they'll need during the blazing summer months.

Dean said that the new outpost will offer them a way to keep a constant, 24-hour presence in the area to keep the quiet that's been won by many battles in months past.

"Having the combat power projected into the area will make the enemy think twice about doing anything," he said.

Even after being moved all over Iraq, making it through one grueling summer and getting extended, Dean said that the mission is still the most important thing.

Baghdad in Brief

Suicide Car Bomb Leaves Three Iraqis Wounded

BAGHDAD - A suicide car bomb detonated at a temporary vehicle checkpoint in the Adhamiyah District of the Iraqi capital, wounding eight U.S. Soldiers and three Iraqi civilians, including a child May 30.

At approximately 4 p.m., Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, were manning the checkpoint near a Sunni village in the Suleikh area of Adhamiyah when a car approached. The driver detonated explosives hidden inside the car, blowing himself up in the process. The blast injured eight the Soldiers as well as three Iraqi civilians in the area. One of the injured was a little boy.

Iraqi Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 11th Army Division, based at the nearby Suleikh Joint Security Station, responded to the scene of the blast to secure the area. They quickly helped evacuate the civilians for medical attention.

Six of the Soldiers received minor wounds and were returned to duty. Two others are in stable condition receiving medical treatment.

Arabic Phrase of the Day

amin

Defined:
security

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 111
Low: 82



Tomorrow

High: 110
Low: 80



Sunday

High: 110
Low: 78

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Apache Crews Keep Eyes on Mission

**By Sgt. 1st Class Rick Emert
1st ACB Public Affairs**

CAMPTAJI, Iraq - Many a Soldier has seen an AH-64D Apache fly overhead and wished they had had that guy's recruiter.

As Army jobs go, helicopter pilot ranks right up there with astronaut on the cool-job scale.

But, ask an Apache pilot what the highlight of his days in Iraq are, and it's not the Apache's firepower or even flying that gets them juiced.

"Ultimately, we support the ground guys. If they need our support, that's our top priority," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Terry Eldridge, an Apache and maintenance test pilot from Company B, 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

"That is the most satisfying thing that we do - going out and supporting the ground forces," echoed Chief Warrant Officer 2 Daryl Hosler, Apache pilot and aviation life support equipment officer for Company B, 1-227th, from Placerville, Calif.

While responding to troops in contact with the enemy may be the money mission for the pilots, they perform a wide range of essential missions in the Multi-National Division - Baghdad area, including reconnaissance, VIP flight escorts, convoy escorts and presence missions.

No matter what the mission, their time in the air is not exactly soothing.

"There is a lot of information to process," said Eldridge, who hails from Lexington,

Okla. "It's pretty stressful. We have to constantly consider air traffic avoidance and obstacle avoidance."

Additionally, the crews have to monitor four different radio systems, including frequencies from other multinational divisions in the busy skies over Iraq, according to 1st Lt. Thomas Loux, an Apache pilot and platoon leader.

"From where we are at in the air, we can get shot at from anywhere," Hosler said. "That's always in the back of your mind."

"Everybody looks at it differently," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Sebastien Cosyns, an Apache pilot and instructor pilot from Tucson, Ariz. "The ground guys are seeing action day in and day out. From our perspective - in the air - if we get hit, we may be coming down. You try not to think about that. If something is going to happen, then it's going to happen. You can't afford to think about it constantly while you are on a mission."

Before the flight however, the risks involved get a lot of thought - and are included in the mission planning.

"We assess the risk before we start any mission," Eldridge said. "You'll know that this mission or that mission has a higher risk before you even begin."

Unlike the ground forces who interact with Iraqis every day, the Apache pilots have only a birds-eye view of what life is like for the people of Baghdad.

"I've spent most of my deployments in Baghdad," Eldridge said. "There's a big difference between now and



(Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Rick Emert, 1st ACB Public Affairs)
1st Lt. Thomas Loux, an Apache pilot, performs a pre-flight inspection on an aircraft May 16 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

(Operation Iraqi Freedom I) in the areas that we will fly over without hesitating. Some of those areas we could not fly over in previous deployments. I don't want to say if it's better or worse here now. That's not for me to determine."

"In some areas, I see people waving at us as we fly over; in other areas, they throw rocks," said Loux, a native of Fort Myers, Fla.

While the pilots can't give an assessment of the security situation from their view of Baghdad, they do have opinions on the portrayal of Iraq in the news.

"I stopped watching the news after news reports of a mission I had been involved in were completely different than what happened," Hosler said.

"Everything I do is to support the Soldier next to me," Eldridge said. "On the news, things are very one-sided. The Soldiers over here who are making a difference - with things like purifying the drinking water - don't sell newspapers. Instead,

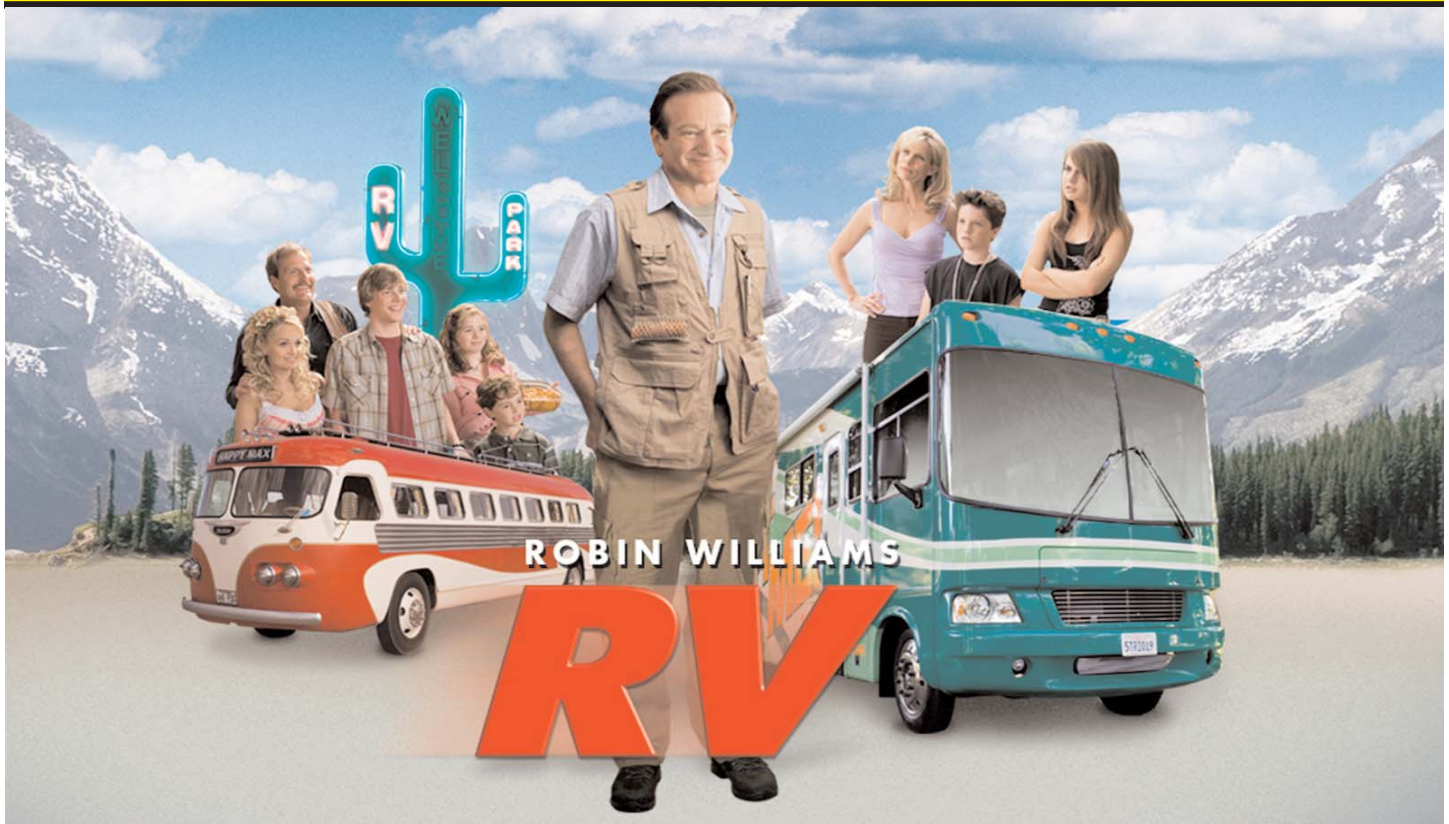


Chief Warrant Officer 2 Terry Eldridge, an Apache pilot, performs a pre-flight inspection on an aircraft May 16 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

the headlines are about the latest Al Qaeda video."

The pilots don't spend a lot of time thinking about the politics of Iraq, focusing instead on their top mission priority.

"I remind myself of why we are here - to support the ground guys," Loux said. "We work for them."



Close Quarters Results in Close Family Ties

Nobody has a perfect family. Siblings fight, parents fight, the house is messy, kids smart off. Everyone has something to complain about.

Probably the worst problem a family can have is no longer noticing each other. That was the issue presented to us in the film "RV" (that stands for recreational vehicle, for those of you who haven't camped in luxury).

Robin Williams' character, Bob, had worked himself up in a soft drink company and had done well for him and his family. They had a nice house and nice things, and were planning a nice vacation to Hawaii.

The wife, Jamie (played by Cheryl Hines), was in a rut. She was ready for this vacation so she could get a little one on one time with her hubby.

The daughter, Cassie (played by Joanna "Jo Jo" Levesque) wants nothing to do with her family. She is the prime example of the snotty teenager and this hurts Bob the most. She used to be daddy's little girl and now she just calls

Random Review

By Sgt.
Nicole Kojetin



(Photos Courtesy of Columbia Pictures)

him lame.

The son, Carl (played by Josh Hutcherson) is small for his age and is trying desperately to compensate by working out and acting like a gangster. He is the only one who will give Bob the

time of day.

All in all, they were just a regular dysfunctional family. Things just happen to get a little stranger when they cram into a neon colored recreational vehicle and make their way through the Colorado mountains.

Being in close quarters forces them to communicate. So, barriers start to break down and with the help of an annoying family they meet along the way, they start to really enjoy being around each other.

There are some semi-humorous moments in this kid-friendly flick, but most of them have to deal with bodily functions or ignorant people they meet along the way. I was disappointed as a Robin Williams fan. There was also a scene that was shameless advertisement for Apple's iProducts. Just poor taste.

While the values in this movie are valid points, I would stay away from this one unless you want to see Robin Williams covered in septic waste.

(One out of five stars!)

